

REMARKS

Applicants have amended the claims previously considered on the merits in the above-identified application, by incorporating the subject matter of claim 11 into claim 19. In view of this amendment of claim 19, Applicants have cancelled claim 11 without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, by the present amendments, the subject matter of previously considered claim 11 has been set forth in independent form, as presently amended claim 19. Moreover, by the present amendments, withdrawn claims 1 and 13-18 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and in particular without prejudice to the filing of a Divisional application directed to the subject matter thereof.

The Examiner is thanked for the indicated allowance of claim 34, set forth in Item 8 on page 10 of the Office Action mailed November 29, 2007.

In addition, Applicants note the objection to claim 11, and the indication that claim 11 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims". See Item 7 on page 10 of the Office Action mailed November 29, 2007. By the present amendments, the subject matter of claim 11 has been set forth in independent form, as presently amended claim 19. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 19, as well as all claims dependent thereon, should now be allowed.

The rejection of claims 2-10, 12 and 19-33 under 35 USC 103(a), set forth in Item 6 on pages 2-9 of the Office Action mailed November 29, 2007, is noted. As claim 11 was not rejected over the combined teachings of references as set forth in Item 6 of the Office Action mailed November 29, 2007, and as the subject matter of claim 11 has been incorporated into claim 19, it is respectfully submitted that this

February 29, 2008

prior art rejection in the Office Action mailed November 29, 2007, is moot, and no further discussion thereof is necessary.

The present amendments to the claims are being made to facilitate proceedings in connection with the above-identified application, so as to achieve earliest possible issuance of a patent based thereon, and without disclaimer of the subject matter previously claimed. The present amendments do not constitute agreement with, or an admission as to the propriety of, the prior art rejection or arguments made by the Examiner in connection therewith.

In view of the foregoing comments and amendments, reconsideration and allowance of all claims presently pending in the above-identified application, and passing of the above-identified application to issue in due course, are respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants hereby petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Kindly charge any shortage of fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including any extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Account No. 01-2135 (case 1204.44601X00), and please credit any overpayments to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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